

The Moderately Talented Yet Plucky
Repertory Theatre of Justice
Presents

THE WIZARD OF LAWZ

freely adapted by Marla Elliott, Joan Fairbanks, and Pat McIntyre
for the first Washington State Access to Justice Conference,
October, 1996
(with apologies to L. Frank Baum, Harold Arlen, Yip Harburg and anybody else who feels offended.)

CAST (in order of appearance)

DOROTHY
MISS GULCH/WICKED WITCH OF INJUSTICE
SCARECROW/JUDGE
TIN MAN/BAR PRESIDENT
LION/LEGAL SERVICES LAWYER
GOOD WITCH BARBARA
GOOD WITCH LAUREN
MUNCHKINS
DOORMAN
WIZARD
ORCHESTRA

Marla Elliott
Chris Allen
Lisa Brodoff
Vince Brown
Pat McIntyre
Barbara Clark
Lauren Moore
to be determined later
Mary Fairhurst
Paul Stritmatter
Nancy Isserlis, Joan Fairbanks

THE WIZARD OF LAWZ

(Overture: medley of songs from the Wizard of Oz)

(At rise: a trailer park in Tukwila, in front of Dorothy's single wide mobile. DOROTHY enters, stands center.)

DOROTHY: Gosh, Toto. It sure is hard for a poor Tukwila girl like myself to get a fair shake in the justice system these days. Even with my job helping Auntie Em at the feed store and my food stamps, I can hardly pay the space rent for my old single wide mobile home. And my landlady, mean old Miss Gulch, keeps raising the rent!

MISS GULCH/WICKED WITCH (*entering*): And by the way, I've changed my mind about your pet deposit. That dog is a menace to society and he's got to go!

DOROTHY: But I've already paid the pet deposit! It says right here in my lease that I can keep Toto!

MISS GULCH/WICKED WITCH: That's just too bad. If you can't comply with my rules, I'll just have to tow your shabby little trailer out of here! (*turns to go*) And your little dog, too! (*exit*)

DOROTHY: What'll I do? Where can I get justice! I know! I'll try the courthouse!

JUDGE/SCARECROW(*entering*): I'm sorry, young lady, but you can't just barge in here. You'd better get yourself a lawyer.

DOROTHY: I don't mean to be disrespectful, but it doesn't take brains to see that I can't afford a lawyer!

JUDGE/ SCARECROW: Well, I can't help that. You'll just have to do the best you can .(*exits*)

DOROTHY: Gosh, Toto! Here comes the president of the bar association! Let's ask him!

(*enter BAR PRESIDENT/TIN MAN:*)

DOROTHY: Pardon me sir, but can you help me? I need a lawyer!

BAR PRES/TIN MAN: I wish I could I really do, but—I just can't.(*starts to leave*)

DOROTHY: Come on! Have a heart!

BAR PRES/TIN MAN: Try the Legal Aid office.(*exits*)

DOROTHY: That's it! I'll call the Legal Aid office! They've helped me before! (*mime phone*)

(*phone rings*)

LEGAL AID LAWYER/LION:(*entering, answering phone*) Good morning, Courageous Legal Services.

DOROTHY: I need help! My landlady is a wicked witch!

LEGAL AID LAWYER/LION: Sorry, we'd like to help, but there's a funding tornado on the way. We've all got to get into the storm cellar! (*hangs up*)

DOROTHY: Oh no! Isn't there anyplace where I can get help? I only want what's right and just!

(*sings*)

Somewhere over the rainbow
I can see
There's a land where there's justice
Even for folks like me

Somewhere over the rainbow
Courts are fair
And if I get evicted
Legal Aid would be there

Some day I'll wish upon a star
And wake up where a system I can trust is
Where regardless of my poverty, or race or disability, I'll have access to justice!

Somewhere over the rainbow
If we try
There'll be access to justice
If we can visualize

(*Loud wind sounds start*)

DOROTHY: Golly, Toto! That must be the funding tornado! It's blowing everything apart! We'd better get back to the mobile home park!

(Wind sounds get louder)

DOROTHY: Oh no! We're caught up in the middle of the tornado! Hold on, Toto!

(WITCH, SCARECROW, TIN MAN, AND LION run in a big Twyla Tharp-y circle around DOROTHY as wind sounds get louder. Big piano chord signals landing in Land of Lawz. All cast except DOROTHY lower to the ground & scurry offstage)

(enter GOOD WITCHES and MUNCHKINS)

DOROTHY (seeing GOOD WITCHES): I have a feeling we're not in Tukwila any more, Toto.

GOOD WITCH BARBARA: Are you a good witch or a bad witch?

DOROTHY: I'm not a witch at all. I'm Dorothy Gail from Tukwila. Who are you?

GOOD WITCH LAUREN: We are the good witches of Funding, and the little people who live in this land are our board of trustees.

(MUNCHKINS giggle)

DOROTHY: I was on my way to try to find justice when a huge funding tornado scrambled all the legal services offices and brought me here. Where am I?.

GOOD WITCH BARBARA: You're in the land that is ruled by the wonderful Wizard of Lawz, my dear.

DOROTHY: Golly! Do you think that if I went to see the wizard, he could help me find justice?

GOOD WITCH LAUREN: Could be. He's a very powerful wizard.

DOROTHY: How could I get to see him?

GOOD WITCH BARBARA: You just follow the Yellow Brick Road to the Emerald City. That's where you'll find the wizard's office on the very top of the Space Needle.

DOROTHY: Just follow the Yellow brick road?

GOOD WITCH LAUREN: Follow the yellow brick road! But...watch out for the wicked witch of Injustice! She'll try to stop you if she can! Good luck!

MUNCHKINS: Goodbye!

(GOOD WITCHES and MUNCHKINS wave goodbye, exit)

DOROTHY: Follow the yellow brick road... Follow the yellow brick road..

(Piano plays "Follow the yellow brick road." Dorothy skips merrily along the road . Scarecrow enters and positions himself with arms out)

DOROTHY(seeing Scarecrow): Oh ! Who are you?

SCARECROW: I might ask you the same question.

DOROTHY: I'm Dorothy Gail, from Tukwila. I'm on my way to see the Wizard of Lawz to try to get

some justice.

SCARECROW: You are? Do you think the Wizard could give me some brains?

(sings)

I could formulate a quorum
On access to the courtroom
And really feel their pain
With my thoughts judiciary I could be a luminary
If I only had a brain...

DOROTHY: Why I'm sure the Wizard would give you some brains. He could probably even make you a judge! Why don't you come with me?

SCARECROW: Why, thank you, I'd be delighted!

(DOROTHY & SCARECROW link arms and march off down the Yellow Brick Road together. Piano plays "Yellow Brick Road". TIN MAN enters and takes a stance)

DOROTHY:*(seeing TIN MAN)* Who's that?

SCARECROW: He seems to be one of the metallurgically challenged!

TIN MAN: That's right. I'm all made of tin. Comes in pretty handy playing dodgeball, but there's just one thing wrong.

(sings)

It's a long and rocky journey
Becoming an attorney
It takes a lot of smarts
But I could go quite wild and express my inner child
If I only had a heart.

DOROTHY: We're on our way to see the Wizard to get justice and brains. Do you suppose the wizard could give you a heart, too?

TIN MAN: Would you let me come with you? I've always wanted a heart!

SCARECROW: Of course! Come on!

(Piano plays, "Yellow Brick Road". DOROTHY, SCARECROW, and TIN MAN skip merrily along together. LION jumps out at them.)

LION: Rrrrrroooaaarrr!

TIN MAN: What?

(DOROTHY, SCARECROW, & TIN MAN are puzzled rather than scared.)

LION *(Suddenly meek, since they are not scared)*: What's the matter, didn't I scare you?

(DOROTHY, SCARECROW, & TIN MAN shake their heads..)

LION: That's what I was afraid of.*(faints)*

(DOROTHY, SCARECROW, & TIN MAN gather around LION, lift him up, fan him, pat his hand)

DOROTHY:(to LION) Are you all right?

SCARECROW: He's not very brave, is he?

LION: *(coming to)*: It's not that, it really isn't. It's just hard to have courage when you feel so...restricted!

(sings)
If it weren't for these restrictions
And crazy contradictions
You'd see how far I'd reach
I could be incompilant
On behalf of my client
If I only were unleashed!

TIN MAN: We're on our way to see the wizard of Lawz so we can get justice and brains and a heart. Maybe the wizard would give you some courage.

LION: Oh do you think he could? Would you let me come with you?

DOROTHY: Of course! Come on!

SCARECROW*(sings)*: I could be a legal giant

TIN MAN *(sings)*: I'd be breakin' down and cryin'

LION *(sings)*: I'd be defiant for my client

DOROTHY:*(sings)*: If the Wizard just can practice what he preached

TIN MAN: *(sings)*: Then I'm sure to get a heart

DOROTHY*(sings)*: A home

SCARECROW *(sings)*: A brain

LION*(sings)*: Unleashed!

(DOROTHY, SCARECROW, TIN MAN, & LION link arms & skip off down the yellow brick road)

DOROTHY, SCARECROW, TIN MAN, & LION:

(sing)
We're off in search of justice
Justice for Washington State
We know that access isn't great
But hey, it's never too late

For justice to materialize
We're all gonna have to visualize
We'll have to use our courage, hearts, and brains
We're just gonna have to cooperate

We're off to see the wizard
The wonderful wizard of Lawz!

(An image of the Space Needle appears on the screen.)

DOROTHY: Look! There it is at last! The Emerald City!

LION: And there's the Space Needle! Last one to the top is a rotten egg!

(DOROTHY, SCARECROW, TIN MAN, & LION rush up to the elevator doors of the Space Needle. The DOORMAN enters and stands between them and the door.)

SCARECROW: *(to the DOORMAN)* Let us in! We want to see the Wizard!

DOORMAN: Do you have an appointment?

LION: No, but I need courage!

TIN MAN: I need a heart!

SCARECROW: And I need some brains

DOORMAN: I don't care what you need. We had Ross Perot here last week asking for the very same things. Nobody gets in to see the wizard without an appointment!

DOROTHY: But I've come all the way from Tukulila!

DOORMAN: Tukulila,? Why didn't you say so? Just a minute, let me check. *(mimes phone, talks on phone to unseen person)* Hello? Yes. Yes. No, not Perot this time. Yes, Tukulila. Four of them. All right. *(hangs up)* The Wizard will see you now *(exits)*

TIN MAN: At last we're going to see the wizard!

(DOROTHY, SCARECROW, TIN MAN, & LION enter the WIZARD's throne room. Noise, smoke, lights, confusion. The WIZARD is hidden behind a curtain at the side of the stage and speaks through a microphone, distorting his voice. A slide of the WIZARD's grimacing face fills the screen.)

WIZARD*(loudly, through a microphone, distorted)*: Who dares to approach the great Wizard of Lawz?

(DOROTHY, SCARECROW, TIN MAN, & LION tremble & cower.)

DOROTHY: We've come a very long way and we heard you were a very great wizard. Can you help us?

WIZARD: Bring me the briefcase of the Wicked Witch of Injustice and I will grant your requests.

SCARECROW: But how can we do that? She's too powerful!

WIZARD: Bring me that briefcase and I'll grant your request*(exits)*.

(Noise, smoke, lights, return to normal)

TIN MAN: I guess we'll have to do the best we can

LION: We've come too far to turn back now

DOROTHY: How do we find the Wicked Witch of Injustice?

SCARECROW: I have a feeling she'll find us!

WITCH(*enter cackling, with briefcase*): That's right, my pretties! You don't have to go far to find the Wicked Witch of Injustice! Surrender to me or you'll be sorry!

TIN MAN: Oh no! What'll we do?

SCARECROW: :Listen to me, everybody! I've got an idea!

(*DOROTHY, SCARECROW, TIN MAN, & LION huddle and discuss in whispers, gesturing and looking towards WITCH, who remains onstage, cackling. DOROTHY, SCARECROW, TIN MAN, & LION break the huddle and line up across the stage*)

DOROTHY: I hope this works!(*Hands a large document to TIN MAN*)

TIN MAN: I've got a feeling it just might!(*TIN MAN signs it, hands it to SCARECROW*)

SCARECROW: I think it'll work!(*signs document, hands it to Lion*) Here: you serve her.

LION: All right(*marches over to Witch*). Here you are.

WITCH: what's this?

DOROTHY, SCARECROW, TIN MAN, & LION (*together*): It's a Temporary Restraining Order!

WITCH (*reading document*): Curses! You've restrained all my beautiful unjust wickedness! (*drops briefcase, slithers away*)

DOROTHY: Quick! Grab her briefcase!

(*LION grabs briefcase*)

LION: We've got it!

TIN MAN: Let's hurry back to the wizard!

(*DOROTHY, SCARECROW, TIN MAN, & LION , carrying briefcase, scurry back to the WIZARD's throne room. Lights, noise, smoke, etc. as before.*)

WIZARD: What are you doing here?

DOROTHY: If you please, sir, it's us; we've brought you the briefcase just like you asked!

WIZARD: Leave it and begone!

LION: But what about our needs? I came for courage!

SCARECROW: I need a brain!

TIN MAN: I need a heart!

DOROTHY: And I need justice!

WIZARD: I will consider your requests...uh...next week! Until then I'm granting you a continuance! Begone!

DOROTHY: But we don't want a continuance! I need justice NOW!

TIN MAN(*sees string laying on floor, leading to curtain*): Wait a minute! What's this string for?

(TIN MAN pulls string, reveals WIZARD standing behind curtain with microphone, looking ordinary. DOROTHY, SCARECROW, TIN MAN, & LION are shocked.)

LION: Hold it a minute ! Who are you?

WIZARD(*into mike, booming*): I am the great and powerful....(*off mike*) uh...Wizard of Lawz.

DOROTHY: You're not a wizard at all!

WIZARD: Well, my dear, not precisely. I started out as a committee chairman, then I became an association president, and before I knew it, the people of the Emerald City started thinking I could really work miracles and elected me wizard!

SCARECROW But that means you can't really help us!

WIZARD: I wouldn't be too sure about that. Sometimes you can help a lot of people even if you're not a real wizard. You, for instance. You think you need brains, when all you really need to do is use the brains you have. You have at least as much brain as several of distinguished members of the judiciary. However, they have something you don't: a robe and a gavel (*puts robe on SCARECROW and hands him gavel*). By the power vested in me by the land of Lawz, I appoint you chief judge of the Emerald City courts! And remember the words of Learned Hand...

SCARECROW(*proudly*): "Thou shalt not ration justice!"

TIN MAN: What about me?

WIZARD: You, my friend, say you want a heart. You think that compassion has some kind of biological prerequisite. Let me tell you, there are plenty of people—even presidents of bar associations—out there doing Good Works who have no more heart than you. However, they do have something you don't have: a pro bono case.(*WIZARD gives TIN MAN a large case file*). And remember, "There need be no great acts...

TIN MAN: "...Only small acts with great love". Thank you your wizardness. I think I've got it.

WIZARD:(*turning to LION*): And you—you think you lack courage. Why, there are legal services offices all over the country that face tremendous obstacles every day. They have no more courage than you; but they do have something you don't: The challenge of Inadequate funding! Here. (*Gives LION pocket change*).

LION:(*taking change*) They think we'll give up just because of this? Lemme at 'em, lemme at 'em!

WIZARD: Well, there you go then. Good luck, my friends! Farewell!

SCARECROW: Wait a minute! What about Dorothy!

TIN MAN: That's right! You can't leave her out!

DOROTHY: I'm not sure that there's anything you can do to help me.

WIZARD: Don't be ridiculous. Of course I can. You wanted justice, didn't you? You hoped that you could find a place where ordinary people like yourself could gain access to the courts and to get a fair shake. Don't you see—the friends you have right here can help you make that place. You've already learned to work together—you just need to go on working together!

DOROTHY: Oh, of course you're right! We had the power all the time!

SCARECROW: And we'll never let you down, Dorothy!

TIN MAN: We're all in this together!

LION: It wouldn't be much a justice system without you, Dorothy!

WIZARD: And remember—what you served on the Wicked Witch of Injustice was only a temporary restraining order!

(ENTIRE COMPANY comes onstage and sings:

Somewhere over the rainbow
If we try
There'll be access to justice
If we can visualize

We're off in search of justice
Justice for Washington State
We know that access isn't great
But hey, it's never too late

For justice to materialize
We're all gonna have to visualize
We'll have to use our courage, hearts, and brains
We're just gonna have to cooperate

We're off to see the wizard
The wonderful wizard of Lawz!

(ENTIRE COMPANY pairs off, links arms and skips out through center aisle)

FINIS

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The lyrics to all of the Access to Justice Conference skits are available on the website:

www.wsba.org/atj/publications.htm#conferences

East Side Story — 1997

Lawfulpalooza — 1998

The AX-ess Files: Justice is Out There — 1999

The State's Greatest Superheroes: The Justice League of Washington vs. Supervillian Status Quo, "When Indifference Strikes" — 2000